



THE CANAL RING.

THE GREAT DEBATE ENDED.

SPEAKER MCGUIRE TO APPOINT THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE.

THREE RESOLUTIONS ON THE SUBJECT ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY—A COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION TO BE APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER, A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF CANAL MANAGEMENT, AND A COMMITTEE TO BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR PROVIDED FOR THE VICTORY A BARREN ONE FOR THE RING—DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSION.

ALBANY, March 25.—The great debate on the Canal Ring, which will be remembered for many a long year in Albany, which filled the town with anxious contractors, and brought on the Canal Ring all the horrors of the damned in advance, is ended, and it is hard to say which side has won. If there has been a victory for the Ring they owe it to their quiet and persistent manipulation of the House during the last two days. At the close of a three hours' session to-night, the longest evening sitting of the Winter, the House adopted Mr. Waehner's amendment providing for the appointment of the Committee by the Speaker. The Speaker's popularity on the floor, and the singular announcement which he had made to the House that he should consider it a personal insult if he was deprived of the right to appoint the Committee, made the conclusion inevitable. The House also adopted Mr. Faulkner's resolution, which Mr. Waehner's amendment affected, providing for the appointment of a committee to investigate the general management of the canals. It also adopted Mr. Schuyler's resolution, given below, authorizing the Governor to appoint a commission for the same purpose, and in addition to this approved a resolution of Mr. Waehner directing the Judiciary Committee to report a bill empowering the Governor to appoint a commission, and granting that commission all the necessary powers to send for persons and papers, and in other ways perform its legitimate functions.

A BARREN VICTORY FOR THE RING.
So far as the adoption of the plan for a Legislative investigation goes, this is a Canal Ring victory, for it has evidently been their desire all through to be investigated by a Legislative Committee that was limited to the space of 30 days in which to do its work. So far as the approval of the scheme of a commission goes, it is a victory for the Governor, and indeed the Canal Ring saw that they could not prevent this, and so made a show of yielding gracefully and voluntarily what they could not withhold. But it is evident that whatever triumph the Ring has gained is but a barren one. The Governor is to have his commission, provided, of course, that the Senate concur, and that is a victory for the honest men of all parties. The Legislative Committee may cover the Canal Ring all over with whitewash if it chooses, without in the least mending the looks of that dark complexioned organization, but it will require a high degree of courage to do so with the Governor's investigation staring them in the face. Both investigations may be searching and impartial, but in any event one of them will be watched with interest and received with respect. All of the votes were won over, and practically unanimous.

THE LEADING SPEECHES.
The leading speeches in both Houses of the Legislature during the morning tended to the benefit of the contractors. Ex-Lieut. Gov. Alvord's careful and detailed argument occupied itself chiefly with a side of this many-sided subject which deserves full and prominent consideration. He analyzed several prominent contracts showing that the successive steps to increase the cost of the work were the result of successive acts of the Legislature or awards of the Canal Board. He showed that the contract system was full of imperfections and weaknesses and gates to fraud, and that these opportunities for theft had been increased by the acts of law-makers and officials everywhere. He took special pains to show that the increase in the cost over the original estimate of canal repairs found a parallel in the increase in the cost of all public and private works over the original estimate. He condemned the existing system as vicious and corrupting, and cited instances to show that his course had been a consistent condemnation of the system during his whole public career. Mr. Alvord's speech, however, would have been better rounded off if he had taken the opportunity to denounce as they deserve the men who have bribed the Legislature and manipulated the Canal Board into the passage of the bills and granting of the awards of which he complained; who have corrupted and browbeaten engineers into complicity with their thefts; and who have debauched politics in the interior of the Empire State. The impression left on the mind by Mr. Alvord's speech was that the contractors were rather shrewd, good-natured fellows, who thought it a good joke to take playful advantage of verdant young engineers placed in charge of the work which they were doing, and tended to represent them in the light of men who hardly thought it worth while to resist the conspiracy in which the Legislature, the Canal Board, and the engineers were engaged to put money in their pockets.

Senator Lansing's speech in the Senate was more pronounced in favor of the contractors, and sought to cast discredit upon the figures of the Governor as given in his message. Mr. Alvord, however, was explicit in his condemnation of the system and all the evils that had grown out of it.

These were the two marked speeches of the day, and beyond these there was not much that was instructive or entertaining in the debate, unless both of these adjectives may be held to apply to the spectacle of Jarvis Lord quoting Scripture in his place in the Senate at the same time that he named THE TRIBUNE as the official sheet of Gov. Tilden. One of these utterances followed the other within a single minute, and neither seemed to stick in his throat.

A LIVELY EVENING SESSION.

The evening session of the House was more lively. Gaslight seems to kindle warmth in the sluggish

line in support of the Governor, showing that again, in the progress of a session in which all the storms have been of the Governor's making, much of his support was to come from his political opponents. The example of Messrs. Lincoln and Vedder this afternoon in rallying suddenly to the side of the Speaker was quietly disregarded, and some of the most influential and upright Republicans of the House spoke out boldly in favor of the appointment by the Governor. They lauded the reform record of Samuel J. Tilden, and avowed their willingness to give him all the aid in their power, whether his motives were ulterior or not. Mr. Prince promised that for every 100 Democrats who deserted Gov. Tilden in this conflict 1,000 Republicans would flock to his side.

Speaker McGuire here seized an opportunity (indeed he never allows one to slip) of insulting the Governor. Mr. Prince spoke of the Governor's bravery in grappling with Tammany and tearing it down. The Speaker was instantly on his feet to inquire if the gentleman believed that the person to whom he referred had performed that service. Mr. McGuire limited himself to this sort of thing in debate. It is only off the floor that he uses language more forcible but less elegant. Mr. Prince talked with a charming frankness of the Canal Ring, for there has been undue tenderness shown to this thick-skinned organization throughout the whole debate, and charged that it was a more corrupt ring than Tammany. He pledged himself to the support of the Governor, who, he said, was the noblest son of Columbia, the county he represented. Mr. Bartis, Mr. Petty, Mr. Warner Miller, and Gen. Husted, all Republicans, followed substantially in the same vein. Gen. Husted, taking the opportunity to denounce the proposition to take the appointment of the committee out of the Speaker's hands as humiliating and outrageous. After this the Committee got into a most perplexing parliamentary tangle, which the Canal Ring men endeavored to twist into a hopeless knot, with the idea of postponing action until to-morrow, and thus gaining another day's grace. The snarl was finally unraveled in the way already described.

THE DEBATE IN THE SENATE.
The debate on the Governor's message took up nearly all the time of the Senate at the day session. It was heard with close attention by as large an audience as the Senate chamber could conveniently hold. Jarvis Lord was delivered of a long speech, in the beginning of which he surprised his hearers by referring to the Scriptures. His pet phrase, frequently referred to in the address, was the characterization of THE TRIBUNE as Gov. Tilden's official paper. Mr. Lord's address—it could hardly be called an argument—was discursive and lacking in point. A very large part of it was taken up with statements of the excess of expenditure over estimates in the building of the Erie Canal and in its enlargement, and of the excess of expenditure in other works. Then Mr. Lord repeated the names of all the prominent State officers who held positions during the prosecution of the great undertakings on the Erie Canal, and asserted that no one had ever dared to charge these great men of complicity with fraud. Hence he claimed that the excess of expenditures over estimates in the canal contracts given in THE TRIBUNE, and referred to generally in the Governor's message, gave no reason to suspect fraud. Mr. Lord also set in some references to his favorite theme, the evil effects of reducing the tolls of the canals. For himself personally he modestly shrunk from the honor of being considered the chief of the Canal Ring, but claimed that he had reason to be proud, and was proud, of every detail of his connection with canal management. Mr. Lord gave some attention to the provisions of the canal contracts, calling attention to the language concerning alterations and increase of work.

Mr. Lord spoke with great deliberation. He was evidently not overburdened with fast-throbbing fancies, although some of his assertions and inferences, slowly and emphatically uttered as they were, were fanciful in the extreme. He was not so profuse in blunt personalities as some of his friends had feared, but his bitter hostility to the Governor, and his rage at the exposure of corruption which had been made, appeared frequently in his language with little or no disguise. Mr. Lord's grief and horror over the fact that State officials could be charged with corruption or with conniving at canal frauds were evidently very poignant. At least Mr. Lord intimated that they were overwhelming, and expressed the deepest solicitude that the honor of the State and of her servants might not be tarnished. But Mr. Lord was neither so violent nor so grotesque as it was expected he would be; and his effort of more than an hour, whether regarded as melodrama or low comedy, rather disappointed his hearers.

Senator Lansing of Buffalo followed Mr. Lord. He assured Senators repeatedly that he would take up their time only a few minutes, but, after speaking an hour and a quarter, gave way to a motion for a recess, and he stated that he will occupy three-fourths of an hour to-morrow. Mr. Lansing made an earnest, fluent and interesting address. He went into figures even more fully than Mr. Lord and made many comparisons of estimates and expenditures upon great public works. He attributed a great part of the enormous excess of payments over estimates on canal contracts to the inexperience and incapacity of the subordinate engineers and assistants who made the estimates. He defended the officials who let the contracts, on the ground that the Constitution left them no option except to let the contracts to the lowest bidder. He defended the contractors, upon whom he claimed that there was no obligation to look out for the interests of the State, and he asserted that they had the right to get out of the State all that they legitimately could for their work. No blame was attached to persons anywhere in his speech, but he attacked the present system of canal management, in which there is a lack of responsibility. As a partial remedy for the evils of the system Mr. Lansing introduced a bill, providing that canal contracts shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Canal Board; that the Commissioners of the Canal Fund shall report to the Canal Commissioners the amount of money applicable in each month for expenditures on the canals, and that the Canal Commissioners shall have authority to draw upon and expend the amounts so reported; that the Canal Board shall have the supervision, direction and control of the execution of contracts. As another means for improving the present canal system, Senator Lansing will introduce a bill to make the subordinate engineers directly accountable to and removable by the State Engineer.

After Senator Lansing had given way to a motion for a recess, with his speech unfinished, Senator Lord called up his own resolution, introduced Monday evening, to provide for the appointment of an investigating committee by the Senate. Senator Jacobs offered as a substitute a resolution for the appointment of a commission by the Governor to investigate canal management and canal contracts. This proposition aroused Mr. Lord's feelings very roughly, and he made a few pathetic remarks about giving an accuser the power to try the accused by appointing the judge and jury. The accuser

whom Mr. Lord meant was, of course, Gov. Tilden; the accused were the Canal Ring. The substitute offered by Senator Jacobs was finally laid on the table, Mr. Jacobs giving notice that he would call it up in the evening.

THE DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY.

MR. DAVIS'S COMMENTS ON SPEAKER MCGUIRE'S LETTER—MR. ALVORD ON THE NECESSITY OF REFORM IN THE SYSTEM OF CANAL MANAGEMENT—RESOLUTION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE BY THE GOVERNOR—SPEECHES BY MESSRS. WAEHNER AND VEDDER.

(FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.)
ALBANY, March 25.—The general astonishment and disgust provoked by Speaker McGuire's letter in THE TRIBUNE found expression this morning in a few remarks by Mr. Davis. When the Governor's message came up for discussion Mr. Davis rose and said that the day before the Speaker had communicated to several gentlemen his desire that the House should appoint a committee of investigation on canal management, and he introduced a resolution to that effect. In the discussion on that resolution, the Speaker retracted that declaration and treated a proposition originated by himself as an insult to himself. In the mean time a letter from the Speaker appeared in THE NEW-YORK TRIBUNE from which the following is taken:

Canal frauds have been investigated by committees of the Legislature more or less for the past 20 years with no practical good result. Volumes upon volumes of testimony are already in the Library of the State, and the Governor's message is only a review of what is contained in those volumes. The reason investigations have failed is that they have been conducted with a view of attaining some political advantage. The one demanded by the message is for a like purpose, and in all probability will meet with a similar fate. It will be an attempt to blacken a few men's reputations, rivals for political preferment will be denounced and attempted to be shamed. The mover will arrogate and claim industry, honesty and fearlessness, and demand for his services reelection and election to an important position, and "Canal Rings" and "Canal Frauds" will then refuse to repose in the arms resurrected by some future aspirant, and the credulity of the people again played upon to elevate one man else to place and power whose only attribute is political ambition.

Mr. Davis said that he had no objection that the Speaker should fulfill his own prediction as to the results of a committee by his appointment of it, but he wished to call the attention of the House and the people to the declaration of the Governor that he should continue his investigation. Whatever might be the action of the Legislature, the Governor was going forward. The inquiry could not be smothered; the wrongs against the tax-payers could not be whitewashed. He agreed with the Speaker, that the Governor must substantiate every statement of his message; and he had no doubt of his intention and his ability to do so. The people expect it, and they will not be disappointed. He closed by asking unanimous consent to withdraw his resolution naming a committee. Mr. Alvord instantly raised the point of order that the resolution was in custody of the Committee of the Whole, and the Speaker deciding it well taken, Mr. Davis said that, at the proper time, he should withdraw his resolution.

Mr. Faulkner (Dem.) of Livingston said that his resolution, providing for the appointment of the Committee by the House, was offered in good faith, and not in the interest of any party or clique. It was due to all that there should be a thorough investigation of these charges. The campaign against the Canal Ring should be short, sharp, and decisive. He was in favor of moving upon the enemy's works at once. He appealed to the members of the responsible majority to uphold the platform of the Syracuse Convention, which favored full official accountability, and opposes any use of the public moneys for private ends.

The debate fairly opened when ex-Lieut. Gov. Alvord rose and addressed the chair.

SPEECH OF MR. ALVORD.

Mr. Alvord said: I was in hopes that there would be no necessity of doing anything but what our duty as representatives of the people required, to make a close and searching investigation. I should have contented myself with a silent vote if this debate had not drifted into a general attack not only upon systems but upon men. If anyone has come here expecting to hear words drop from my lips to excuse, to cover up, or to hide any of the deeds of the contractors, he will be disappointed. I shall look at this question in a calm and dispassionate way. I have had the honor to be a member of the Canal Board of this State. I had the honor to be a member of the recent Constitutional Convention. In those bodies, as well as in the Legislature, I have repeatedly condemned the system under which the canals were run and the contracts were let. I had the honor to be a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1867-8 and advocated an equalization of power in the hands of one individual for the maintenance and support of the canals, that individual to be held to a rigid accountability to the people of the State. That is the only doctrine under which you can control, manage, and direct public schemes like the one under consideration. I believe that the people, if they had to pass upon the system to-day, would prefer this.

Let us go to the bottom of this matter. Go to your statute book and you will find there statute after statute establishing the way for fraud and taking the responsibility out of the hands of the Canal Commissioners. The State officers who were placed in the Canal Board are not elected on account of their knowledge of the canals, but by reason of their qualifications for the separate offices which they fill. [Mr. Alvord here gave a history of the George D. Lord contract for the improvement of Black Rock Harbor, a remarkable transaction of which account has already been given in THE TRIBUNE.]

The abuses of this system are by no means new. These things were done 30 years ago. They have characterized every enterprise carried on by the General Government, whether a public building or canal, or any similar effort. No private house was ever built which did not cost more than the original estimate.

[Mr. Alvord here analyzed the half million Denison job showing that the increase made in the cost of the work was by successive acts of the Legislature.]
Over the wide extent of the canals of this State there are to be met, from time to time, amendments and improvements. You have a State Engineer at the Capitol whose varied duties there make it impossible for him to supervise 900 miles of canals. You have Division Engineers, and resident engineers in addition, but you must also have many subordinate engineers who watch from early morning till night over the construction of the work, and see that it is properly done. Who are they? They are young and verdant gentlemen who have just stepped out from polytechnic schools where they have received a technical education, and who come into contact with the sharp and skillful men who have made the business of contracting a life-long occupation. In 1873 a letting was had of the Oswego Canal for enlargement. I was not at that time a State officer, but I am rather of an inquiring disposition, and I go around to see what is going on. I found in the canal two horses and a man digging out rotten stone from the bottom of the canal. I found that a young man, who has since become an engineer of great prominence, had made the original estimates for this work, on which the contractor bid 50 cents a cubic yard for blasted rock and \$4 a cubic yard for quarried rock. Now the contractor who took that work knew the geology of the section much better than the young man who had just emerged from college could possibly know it. When the work was completed it was found that 11,000 yards of quarried rock had been taken out at \$4 a yard—shoveled out like mud—while 11 yards of blasted rock had been taken out for which the contractor received 75 cents. This was 22 years ago. I can tell another amusing story. A young engineer made an estimate for the

construction of lock-gates upon the Oswego Canal. They were to be made of oak, and white oak was called for at \$35 a 1,000 feet. The contractor furnished black oak, which cost him only \$12 50 a 1,000 feet, and because the young engineer did not know the difference between white oak and black oak his lock-gates were built of the latter, which is one of the most perishable woods known in this country.

This was 25 years ago. Mr. Chairman, I have theories of my own in reference to this whole question, and I have got them from a large experience in life and affairs. The sooner the people can get rid of the present system, the better it will be for them. No great public work of the magnitude of the canals can possibly be carried on by Government as cheaply as it can be by individuals; but we have this great work, and we must take care of it. My theory in regard to keeping the canals in repair is that of his Excellency, that the State and the repairer of our canals should be partners. I have no question whatever that there are immense contracts let which are against the interests of the people. I have no question in that regard whatever. I think that this examination ought to go on for this purpose, if for no other. A law should be introduced requiring the Canal Board to declare contracts closed when it is discovered that work is being done on them in opposition to the interests of the people. (This provision, which is approved by Mr. Alvord, is one of the features of Mr. Davis's Canal Reform bill.) The State might well imitate the example of a certain great corporation, the New-York Central and Hudson River Railroad Corporation, in the construction of its double track from Albany to Rochester. The contract for this work is let out to the contractors by specifications for the materials and the work to be called for, and without specification of quantities. The contractor is compelled to make his estimate without knowing what quantities will be called for, and knowing that, in order to obtain the contract, his bids must be below those of his neighbors. The work was splendidly done, but even in this case \$15,000,000 was spent for that work on which they had expected to expend only between \$9,000,000 and \$10,000,000. Mr. Chairman, I hope and trust that we shall have come to a final conclusion, and we shall have arranged that the proper committees of this House will recommend legislation to root out this system which is corrupting the whole State, and put in its place some honest, straightforward way in which the canal repairs can be made. I have indulged in jestsures on individuals. Immediate action is demanded at the hands of the Legislature, and we should see that it be had. This magnificent work which was started during the early lifetime of the individual who is now addressing you, has gone on nourishing the State, building up thriving cities on its banks, and pouring into the empire city a stream of gold which enriches its soil from the Hudson to the Erie. The beautiful city which lies in the arm of the sea would have been a hamlet to-day except for the canals of this State; and it is for the proper care of this magnificent public work that our action is to provide.

SPEECH OF MR. BENEDICT.

Mr. Benedict (Dem.) of Schenectady said that the story of Geo. D. Lord's contract was an old story. Whenever a contract was at all disadvantageous to the State, it was abandoned by the contractor. Sufficient has been said on the floor to prove that the whole system and management of the canals is vicious, and it is therefore the manifest duty of this House to give this question an earnest consideration. I am thankful to see indications of this spirit. It is idle to assert that the State of New-York, with its manifold interests, cannot manage its own canals. Such an assertion is a confession of weakness, and in total conflict with our theory of government by the people. It is simply a business operation. It is for us to devise some way of meeting the difficulty. Who in times past has been solely responsible for these changes under canal contracts? The ready answer is: None, but many. If for these things we are to thank the Constitution of 1845, which seems to have changed official responsibility into official license, let us apply the remedy. Let the appointment of Canal Commissioners reside with the Governor and the Senate. Remove these officials from party and convention and entangling alliances. Remove these officials from connection with the political parties of the State, and put them under responsibility to the Executive. Do away with the Canal Board and appoint, if you please, an Advisory Council; but of the expediency of that I am by no means sure. But of one thing I am convinced, that no board of managers depending upon party conventions can rightfully be placed in control of the canals of the Empire State.

AN AMENDMENT BY MR. SCHUYLER.

Resolved, (If the Senate concur) the Governor is hereby authorized to appoint a commission of three persons, whose duty it shall be to investigate the affairs of the canals of this State, and to report the results of their investigation to the Legislature on the 15th of March, 1876. Said commission shall have power to subpoena and compel the attendance of witnesses, to require the production before them of any papers in the custody or possession of any person, and to examine such witnesses and such public records of the State as they shall require for the purpose of such investigation. Any member of said commission shall have power to administer oaths to witnesses summoned before them, they shall have authority to employ a clerk and stenographer, and shall report the testimony taken, together with such recommendations in respect to the same as they shall deem warranted by the facts, to the Governor and Legislature; they shall also furnish a copy of each testimony to the Attorney-General.

Mr. Schuyler disclaimed any intention of discourtesy to the Speaker. He said that during the debate this mode of settling the difficulty had occurred to him, and, after consultation with his friends, he had concluded to suggest its adoption. He said that the people of the State, and especially of his section, were deeply interested in the Erie Canal, and that there was a precedent for this resolution.

Here occurred one of those episodes which serve to show how quickly any reference to the name of Ezra Cornell, no matter how oblique, arouses Mr. McGuire. Mr. Schuyler said that the precedent for this resolution had been in the case where charges had been made against a fellow-citizen who is now moldering in his grave. Mr. McGuire instantly demanded—evidently under considerable inward excitement—that those charges were Mr. Schuyler rejoined that the citizen to whom he referred was Ezra Cornell. Mr. McGuire responded that that was not an answer to his question, whereupon Mr. Schuyler avoided any further altercation by saying that at all events an investigation had been ordered into the affairs of Mr. Cornell and the Cornell University, in which case a commissioner was appointed by the Governor. This resolution, by the way, is identical in form with that offered by Mr. McGuire for the Ezra Cornell investigation, and was copied from that resolution on the official records.

MR. WAEHNER'S DEFENSE OF THE SPEAKER.

Mr. Waehner discussed solely the question of the Speaker's fitness to appoint the Special Committee, and made a strong appeal that he be allowed to perform that duty. He said that, as the Assembly was a distinct branch of the Legislature, it was simply honest and competent to appoint this committee. He would not have it go forth to the world, from any body of which he was a member, that members of that body had not sufficient confidence in their presiding officer to allow him to appoint such a committee. The only deduction, said he, that can be drawn from such a circumstance would be that it has not sufficient confidence in him to believe that he will form and honestly appoint a committee to investigate these frauds. Why is the Governor in a position to appoint a commission? We have investigated matters of public interest, but now the legislation necessary to correct these

evils must be passed upon without our cooperation. Let our committee make the investigation as it is proper. When charges are made against public officials or against private parties it is the right of these persons to demand a speedy, a swift and honest investigation. Does the resolution of the gentleman from Livingston present any obnoxious feature? I do not see it, for by the appointment of a committee by this House we can obtain all the information that is desired. We can gain this information as well ourselves as from the hands of others. When any charges are made by any person, official or otherwise, it is not the thing to allow that person to appoint the judges who are to try the case. The integrity of the Speaker of this House has been questioned. He was competent enough, it seems, to appoint all the Standing Committees, to appoint all committees of investigation, but now we are told he is not the proper person to appoint this committee. It is for the protection of our dignity that we must refuse to put upon him this insult. Mr. Waehner closed by moving an amendment to Mr. Faulkner's original resolution, that the Speaker appoint the committee.

SPEECH OF MR. VEDDER.

Mr. Vedder (Rep.) of Cattaraugus thought it high time that these canals should be investigated. We are confronted with either a matchless fraud or a miserable sinner which haunts the Executive chamber. If the Speaker is not competent to do that in the appointment of committees, which has always been done, it is time for him to abdicate, and another Speaker should be chosen who could be trusted. This investigation should be made to discharge. If the people are in the system they should be removed, and if our officials have been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors they should be indicted and hurled from power. Politicians should remember that when the people rise in their might they would how the tallest heads. We should endeavor to touch rock bottom in this matter as soon as possible. The only question was the appointment of a committee; he did not believe any one would dare to appoint a whitewashing committee, or that any committee would dare to make a whitewashing report. If the Speaker is not indicted before the people to-day, he asked why he should be decimated by taking from him his prerogative. He did not think the majority ought to deprive their Speaker of this privilege.

Mr. Lincoln, Rep. of Ontario, thought a careful perusal of the message would go far to enable the House to decide this matter. The Governor urged suspension of all extraordinary repairs until work already done could be examined. That examination could only be made before the opening of the canals; hence it is important that the investigation should be begun at once. The Governor had also expressed a desire for the enactment of suitable legislation in the premises. The Legislature is the only power that can take necessary action, and it ought to set about that duty without any regard to the clamor that has been raised. He believed it unheard of that the appointment of a committee of the Legislature had been taken out of the hands of its presiding officer. It would be an expression of lack of confidence in the Speaker to do so. Further, the responsibility of conducting this investigation should be placed on the majority, and they could not afford to appoint a whitewashing committee. He hoped therefore that the amendment of Mr. Waehner would be adopted.

EVENING DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF BOTH A COMMITTEE AND A COMMISSION—SPEECHES OF MESSRS. PRINCE AND FAULKNER IN FAVOR OF THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE—SPEECH OF MR. PETTY ON THE NECESSITY OF IMMEDIATE LEGISLATIVE ACTION—MR. HUSTED ON THE GOVERNOR'S ACTION.

BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.

ALBANY, March 25.—The long debate on the message was taken up again with alacrity by the Assembly in the evening. T. J. Campbell of New-York was called to the Chairmanship of the Committee of the Whole by Speaker McGuire. Mr. Prince made the first address. He handled the question suggested by the Governor's message with clearness and force. Two distinct propositions enforce attention from the Governor's message, he said. The first is purely a legislative matter. The second is the proposed investigation with a view to detect and punish the guilty. This need of early legislative action in the way of reform and remedy is apparent. There will be little difference of opinion among the greater number of the Assembly as to that, and probably among many of the members there is no wide divergence of view as to what legislation is needed. The duty of the Assembly in regard to legislative action is plain and pressing. The duty of investigation is not legislative, and it is totally distinct from the duty of reformatory law-making. Whether the work of investigating should be pursued by a legislative committee or a commission of citizens is a matter about which there may be diversity of judgment. It would be no reflection on the Speaker for the House to make the appointment of an Investigating Committee. No one has a higher respect for the Speaker than I have, but that element of respect for the presiding officer of the Assembly does not really enter into the fundamental issue, whether it is advisable that the investigation shall be done by a legislative committee or an outside commission. The only consideration which should govern us is, how can this investigation be carried on most efficiently? The Legislature is distinctly called upon by public opinion to set on foot direct and searching measures of inquiry on account of the grave charges in the Governor's message. Which will be most efficient, a legislative committee or an outside commission? A legislative committee will not have time enough to carry on a proper investigation, if there were no other obstacles to its usefulness. The session is not very far from its close, and the members now have continuous and important occupation, and the Assemblymen who are the men to put on a committee of investigation, if one should be appointed, are busy with committee work. A Commission would have much more time than a legislative committee.

ADVANTAGES OF A COMMISSION.

Mr. Prince then showed by various arguments the superior efficiency of an outside commission, and afterward considered the objections suggested to the Governor as the power to appoint the Commission. There is an eminent propriety, he remarked, in that the Governor, who has initiated the reform, should carry it to a conclusion; but there is apparently a lack of confidence in the Governor felt by a certain part of the Assembly. This was shown a few weeks ago on the floor, and it seems to have increased since that time but I for one believe in the absolute good faith of the Governor in beginning this reform. It is not a new role for Samuel J. Tilden to play—that of a reformer. There is no reason for any one to doubt his motives in entering upon this reform, when his past record is considered. Mr. Prince then spoke of the part that Mr. Tilden took in the overthrow of the Tweed Ring, and referred to him as grappling with that gigantic power.

Speaker McGuire here interrupted the speaker by asking, in a sneering tone: "Does the gentleman pretend to say that the person of whom he is speaking grappled with that gigantic power and it was overthrown?" Mr. Prince answered that he did not think that any man did more than Samuel J. Tilden in the warfare against that great power. The people of

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FOREIGN NEWS.

THE CARLIST WAR.

ANOTHER DEFEAT OF THE INSURGENTS—FIGUEROA TO BE ATTACKED.

MADRID, Thursday, March 25, 1875.
Gen. Ocampo has inflicted another defeat on the Carlists at Huguet, near Ridawa. The enemy lost 300, and the Alfonsists 65 killed.

The Carlists are concentrating for an attack on Pajareda.

PARIS, Thursday, March 25, 1875.

According to the latest advices from the Carlist headquarters at Estella, Gen. Mendiri, Galtia, and Triana have united in a forcible protest against Gen. Cabrera's manifesto in favor of Alfonso.

BATONNE, Thursday, March 25, 1875.

The Carlist Gen. Mendiri has entered France. A communication from the sugar house of Guardiola, Tiedor & Co. of Saguala Grande, Cuba, of March 11, says:

Within the last two days 14 of the finest estates of this jurisdiction have been completely reduced to ashes by the fires of the incendiaries. The loss could be easily ascertained at six miles from this place. The damage done to machinery and buildings will exceed \$40,000, and the loss of crops cannot be estimated less than \$100,000, and the loss of nothing of the loss inflicted by the fight of negroes.

CHURCH AND STATE IN PRUSSIA.

LAW AGAINST RELIGIOUS ORDERS TO BE PROPOSED.

BERLIN, Thursday, March 25, 1875.

The Government contemplates an amendment of the law against Jesuits so as to make it operative against other religious orders.

THE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION.

REPRESENTATION OF FRENCH PRODUCTS.

PARIS, Thursday, March 25, 1875.

The Commission which has been organized here to secure a proper representation of French products at the United States Centennial Exhibition held a preliminary meeting to-day.

AFFAIRS IN CUBA.

ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE INSURGENTS—EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE FINANCES—SHARKEY TO BE DELIVERED UP TO JUSTICE.

(FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.)

HAVANA, March 20.—A telegram has been received here stating that on the 11th of March, at day break, the village of Paterillo was attacked by the insurgents. The fort at that place was garrisoned by several volunteers, commanded by Lieut. Juan Mestré. After several hours of heavy firing, the insurgents retreated, burning some houses on their way. As soon as Col. Bonilla had news of the affair, he started with his troops in pursuit of the insurgents. On the 6th of March a band of 800 insurgents, composed of Spaniards, on the estate San Antonio de la Union, belonging to Don Vicente Abreu, and set fire to the house. The news was immediately communicated to Brigadier Alejandro Rodriguez Arias, who ordered out 70 volunteers and 80 cavalry of the Civil Guard. There was a sharp fight with the insurgents, who were finally dispersed, four of their number having been killed. On the Spanish side the loss was two killed and several wounded. When the news reached Santa Clara, 200 volunteers were ordered to march to the estate to lend aid to the other forces. But, as everything was quiet when they arrived at the estate, they returned to Santa Clara, taking the wounded with them. It is said that Sunday morning, March 7, a party of insurgents passed through Camaguey toward La Margarita, carrying six dead bodies, perhaps those killed in the skirmish on the estate San Antonio de la Union. On the 10th of March the insurgents attacked a body of Spanish soldiers at San Joé de Yuma with a victory. The Spanish commander of the column ordered a reconnaissance to be made at the place where the rebels appeared, but the rebels, who were in numbers, fled before the advance of the reconnoitering column. The Spaniards, after a desperate struggle, broke through the ranks of the rebels, and succeeded in reaching the fort on the estate, and from there kept up a steady fire against the insurgents, who finally retreated. The Spanish loss was twelve men wounded and killed.

The Captain-General called a meeting of the capitalists in this city on Thursday. The object of the meeting was to raise a draft of 2,000,000 dollars, to be sent to Spain to cover the expenses of the reconnoitering column sent to Cuba. The draft was not raised, and the two drafts were sent to Spain by the steam ship of the 13th of March. A meeting of the tax-payers was held at the palace on Saturday afternoon, March 13, under the direction of the Captain-General. It was attended by many tax-payers from Matanzas, Cardenas, Cienfuegos, and other parts of the island. Count Valmaseda opened the meeting, and gave an account of the critical situation of the island. He requested those present to express their opinion respecting the best and quickest means of improving the condition of the island. All those present acknowledged the pressing necessity of placing money and men at the disposal of the Government, but the means of doing so were not agreed upon. Three gentlemen had already expressed their opinions when the Director of State, Don Bonifacio Corrales Llanos, took the stand. He placed the subject in a practical aspect by referring to the tax-payers and expenses of the Government. From the figures he drew the conclusion that there exists a credit of several millions which should be used to improve the island. Every one should pay his just taxes without holding back anything and trying to deceive the Government. Sharkey, the American, has been arrested, and the Government will probably order his departure from the island, to his own country, as a person dangerous to public safety. This was his delivery up to justice, and nothing more.

FOREIGN NOTES.

BERLIN, March 25.—John Martin, member of Parliament for South, is in a precarious state of health in consequence of excitement produced by the death and funeral of John Smith.

MONTREAL, Canada, March 25.—Advices received here from the lower provinces announce that the coal fleet had been unable to arrive at the mouth of a laborers' strike, and the second fleet, which is feared that the success this year will be more than usual.

PANAMA, March 15.—The threatened trouble between Peru and Bolivia about the passage of a certain number of the troops of the latter Republic through Peruvian territory, seems to be arranged. It was shown to Peru that the troops were not armed, and they remained for the time necessary to cross over to Cobija.

OTTAWA, March 25.—Mr. Devlin, member for Montreal, has given notice that he will move on Saturday next for all papers and correspondence concerning in any way O'Donoghue with the Manitoba disturbances. Mr. Devlin's object is to ascertain the cause of an exclusion from the amnesty recommended by Parliament in favor of Riel, L'Amour, and others. O'Donoghue has written a long letter to Mr. Devlin, detailing minutely the circumstances under which he was arrested, and denying all participation in the murder of Scott.

A GENERAL RAILWAY WAR IMMINENT.

REDUCTION OF FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RATES FROM CHICAGO TO NEW-YORK—FURTHER REDUCTIONS EXPECTED.

CHICAGO, March 25.—The general freight agents of the Michigan Central, Michigan Southern, and Pittsburgh and Fort Wayne Railroads held a meeting to-day and reduced the rates to the East on fourth-class and grain as follows: To New-York, 30 cents per 100 pounds; to Philadelphia, 25 cents; to Baltimore, 25 cents; to Boston and New-England points, 40 cents. This large reduction was brought about by the action of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which has been making contracts during the last week at 35 cents to New-York. There is not the least doubt among railroad men in this city that after this the war will be carried on as vigorously on freight rates as it has been thus far on passenger rates. Nor will the war be confined to the Baltimore and Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroads, but will now spread to every line leading to New-York. It is now stated that the neutral lines will wait no longer than the 1st of April,